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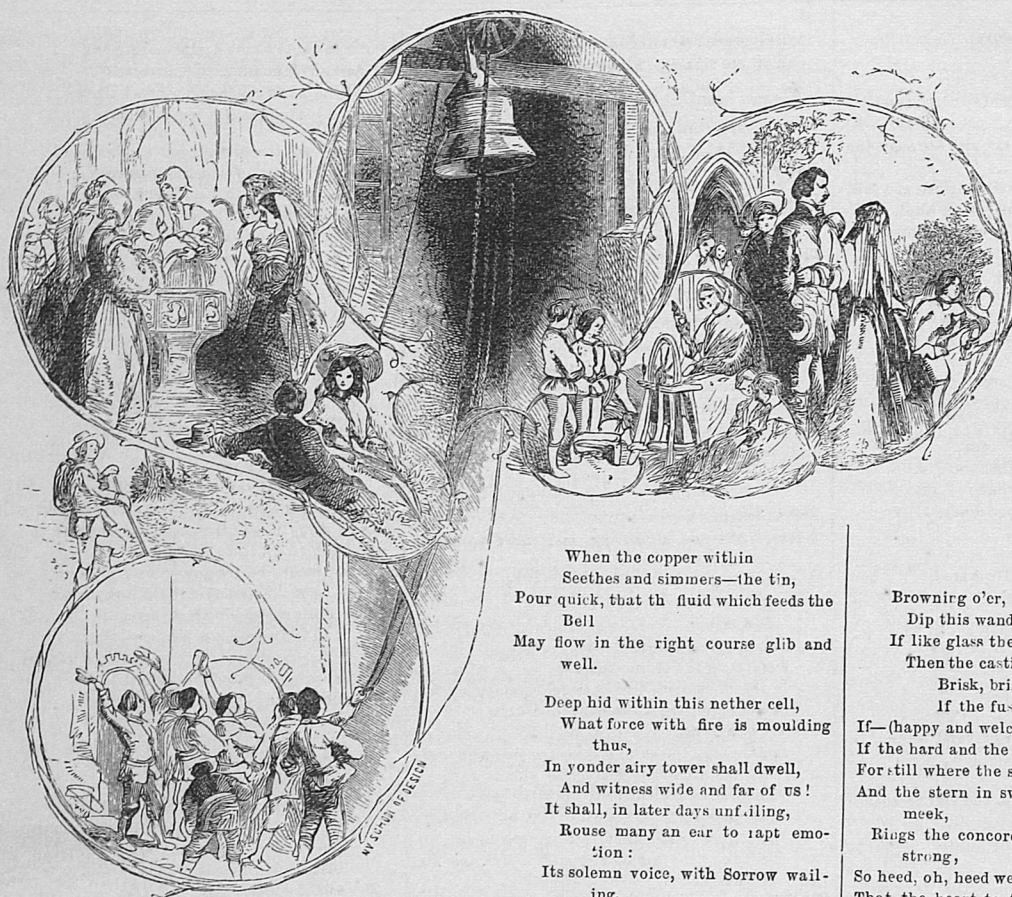
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THE LAY OF THE BELL.

Translated from Schiller, by Sir E.
Bulwer Lytton, Bart

I.

FAST, in its prison-walls of earth,
Awaits the mould of bakéd clay.
Up, comrades, up, and aid the birth—
THE BELL that shall be born to-day!
But with sweat and with pain
Can we honor obtain,
And prove that we master the art we profess;
With Man be the effort, with Heaven the success!

And well an earnest word beseems
The work the earnest hand prepares
Its load more light the labor deems.
When sweet discourse the labor shares.
So let us duly ponder all
The works our feeble strength achieves.
For mean, in truth, the man we call,
Who ne'er what he completes conceives.
And well it stamps our Human Race,
And hence the gift TO UNDERSTAND,
That man, within the heart should trace
Whate'er he fashions with the hand.

II.

From the fir the fagot take,
Keep it, heap it hard and dry,
That the gathered flame may break
Through the furnace, wroth and high.

When the copper within
Seethes and simmers—the tin,
Pour quick, that th' fluid which feeds the
Bell
May flow in the right course glib and
well.

Deep hid within this nether cell,
What force with fire is moulding
thus,
In yonder airy tower shall dwell,
And witness wide and far of us!
It shall, in later days unfailing,
Rouse many an ear to rapt emo-
tion:

Its solemn voice, with Sorrow wail-
ing,

Or choral chiming to Devotion.
Whatever Fate to Man may bring,
Whatever weal or woe befall,
That metal tongue shall backward ring
The warning moral drawn from all.

III.

See the silvery bubbles spring!
Good! the mass is melting now!
Let the salts we duly bring
Purge the flood, and speed the flow.
From the dross and the scum,
Pure, the fusion must come;
For perfect and pure we the metal must keep,
That its voice may be perfect, and pure, and deep.

That voice, with merry music rife,
The cherished child shall welcome in;
What time the rosy dreams of life,
In the first slumber's arms begin,
As yet in Time's dark womb unwarning,
Repose the days, or foul or fair;
And watchful o'er that golden morning,
The Mother-Love's untiring care!

And swift the years like arrows fly—
No more with girls content to play,
Bounds the proud Boy upon his way,
Storms through loud life's tumultuous pleasures,
With pilgrim staff the wide world measures;
And, wearied with the wish to roam,
Seeks, stranger-like, the Father-Home

And lo, as some sweet vision breaks
Out from its native morning skies,
With rosy shame on downcast cheeks,
The Virgin stands before his eyes.

A nameless longing seizes him!
From all his wild companions
flown;
Tears, strange till then, his eyes
bedim;
He wanders all alone.
Blushing, he glides where'er he
move:
Her greeting can transport
him;
To every mead, to deck his love,
The happy wild-flowers court
him!
Sweet Hope—and tender Long-
ing—ye
The growth of Life's first age
of Gold;
When the heart, swelling, seems
to see
The gates of heaven unfold;
Oh, were it ever green! * Oh,
stay,
Linger, young Love, Life's
blooming May!

IV.

Browning o'er, the pipes are simmering,
Dip this wand of clay within;
If like glass the wand be glimmering,
Then the casting may begin.
Brisk, brisk now, and see
If the fusion flow free:
If—(happy and welcome indeed were the sign!)
If the hard and the ductile united-combine.
For still where the strong is betrothed to the weak,
And the stern in sweet marriage is blent with the
meek,
Rings the concord harmonious, both tender and
strong,
So heed, oh, heed well, ere for ever united,
That the heart to the heart flow in one, love-de-
lighted;
Illusion is brief, but Repentance is long!

Lovely, thither are they bring'ng,
With her virgin wreath, the Bride!
To their love-feast clearly ring'ng,
Tolls the church-bell far and wide!
With that sweetest holiday,
Must the May of Life depart;
With the cestus loosed—away
Flies ILLUSION from the heart!
Yet Love must be cherished
Though Passion be mute;
If his blossoms be perished,
They yield to the fruit.
The Husband must enter
The hostile life,
With struggle and strife,
To plant or to watch,
To snare or to snatch,
To pray and importune,
Just wager and venture
And hunt down his fortune
Then flows in a current the gear and the gain,
And the garners are filled with the gold of the grain.
Now a yard to the court, now a wing to the centre!
Within sits Another.
The thrifty Housewife;
The mild one, the mother—
Her home is her life.
In its circle she rules,
And the daughters she schools,
And she cautions the boys
With a bustling command,
And a diligent hand,

Employed she employs;
Gives order to store.
And the much makes the more;
Locks the chest and the wardrobe, with lavender
smelling;
And the hum of the spindle goes quick through the
dwelling;
And she hoards in the presses, well polished and full,
The snow of the linen, the shine of the wool,
Still intent upon use, while providing for show,
And never a rest from her cares doth she know,
Blithe the Master (where the while
From his roof he sees them smile),
Eyes the lands, and counts the gain;
There, the beams projecting far,
And the laden storehouse are,
And the granaries bowed beneath
The blessed golden grain;
There, in undulating motion.
Wave the corn-fields like an ocean.
Proud the boast the proud lips breathe,
"My house is built upon a rock,
And sees unmoved the stormy shock
Of waves that fret below!"
Alas! for never mortal state
Can form perpetual truce with Fate!
Swift are the steps of woe.

V.

Now the casting may begin;
See the breach indented there:
Ere we run the fusion in,
Halt—and speed the pious prayer!
Pull the plug out—
See around and about
Through the bow of the handle the smoke rushes
red—
God help us!—the flaming waves burst from their
bed.

What friend is like the might of fire.
When man can watch and wield the ire?
Whate'er we shape or work, we owe
Still to that heaven-descended glow.
But dread the heaven descended glow,
When from their chains its wild wings go,
When, where it listeth, wide and wild
Sweeps forth free Nature's free-born Child!

When the Frantic One fleets,
While no force can withstand,
Through the popular streets
Whirling ghastly the brand:—
For the Elements hate
What man's labors create,
And the works of his hand.
Impartially out from the cloud,
Or the curse or the blessing may fall!

Benignantly out from the cloud
Come the dews, the revivers of all!
Avengingly out from the cloud
Come the levin, the bolt, and the ball!
Hark—a wail from the steeple!—a loud
The bell shrills its voice to the crowd!

Look—look—red as blood
All on high!
It is not the daylight that fills with its flood
The sky!

What a clamor awaking
Roars up through the street;
What a hell-vapor breaking
Rolls on through the street,
And higher and higher
Aloft moves the Column of Fire!
Through the vistas and rows
Like a whirlwind it goes,
And the air like the steam from a furnace
glows,

Beams are crackling—posts are shrinking
Wall are sinking—windows clinking—
Children crying—
Mothers flying—
And the beast (the black ruin yet smouldering under)
Yells the howl of its pain and its ghastly wonder!
Hurry and skurry—away—away,
The face of the night is as clear as day!
As the links in a chain,
Again and again
Flies the bucket from hand to hand;
High in arches up-rushing
The engines are gushing;
And down comes the storm with a roar!
And it chases the flames as they soar.
To the grain and the fruits,
Through the rafters and beams,
Through the barns and the garner it crackles and
streams!
As if they would rend up the earth from its roots,
Rush the flames to the sky
Giant-high;
And at length,
Wearied out and despairing, man bows to their
strength!

With an idle gaze sees their wrath consume,
And submits to his doom!

Desolate
The place, and dread;
For storms the barren bed.
In the blank voids that cheerful casements were,
Comes to and fro the melancholy air,
And sits Despair;
And through the ruin, blackening in its shroud
Peers, as it flits, the melancholy cloud.
One human look of grief upon the grave
Of all that Fortune gave
The lingerer casts—then turns him to depart,
And grasps the wanderer's staff and mans his
heart:
Whatever else the element bereaves,
One blessing more than all it left, it leaves—
The faces that he loves! He counts them o'er,
Not one dear look is missing from that store!

VI.

Now clasped the bell within the clay—
The mould the mingled metals fill—
Oh, may it, sparkling into day,
Reward the labor and the skill!
Alas! should it fail,
For the mould may be frail—
And still with our hope must be mingled the fear—
And, even now, while we speak, the mishap may be
near!

To the dark womb of sacred earth
This labor of our hands is given,
As seeds that wait the second birth,
And turn to blessings watched by heaven!
Ah seeds, how dearer far than they
We bury in the dismal tomb,
Where Hope and Sorrow bend to pray
That suns beyond the realm of day
May warm them into bloom!

From the steeple
Tolls the bell,
Deep and heavy.
The death-knell!
Guiding with dirge-note—solemn, sad, and slow,
To the last home earth's weary wanderers know.
It is that worshipped wife—
It is that faithful mother!
Whom the dark Prince of Shadows leads benighted,
From that dear arm where oft she hung delighted.

Far from those blithe companions, born
Of her, and blooming in their morn:
On whom, when couched her heart above,
So often looked the Mother-Love!

Ah! rent the sweet Home's union-band,
And never, never more to come—
She dwells within the shadowy land
Who was the Mother of that Home!
How oft they miss their tender guide,
The care—the watch—the face—the MOTHER—
And where she sate the babes beside,
Sits with unloving looks—ANOTHER!

VII.

While the mass is cooling now,
Let the weary labor rest;
Blithe as bird upon the bough,
Each to do as lists him best.
In the cool starry time,
At the sweet vesper-chime,
The workman his task and his travail foregoes—
It is only the Master that ne'er may repose!
Homeward from the tasks of day,
Through the greenwood's welcome way,
Wen is the wanderer, light and cheerily,
To the cottage loved so dearly!
And the eye and ear are meeting,
Now, the slow sheep homeward bleating—
Now, the wonted shelter near,
Lowing the lusty-fronted steer;
Creaking now the heavy wain
Reels with the happy harvest grain.
While, with many-colored leaves,
Glitters the garland on the sheaves;
For the mower's work is done,
And the young folks' dance begun!
Desert street and quiet mart;
Silence is in the city's heart;
And the social taper lighteth,
Each dear face that HOME uniteth;
While the gate the town before
Heavily swings with sullen roar!

Now darkness is spreading;
Now quenched is the light;
But the Burgher, undreading,
Looks safe on the night—
Which the evil man watches with awe,
For the eye of the Night is the Law!

Bliss-dowered! O daughter of the skies,
Hail, holy ORDER, whose employ
Blends like to like in light and joy
Builder of cities, who of old
Called the wild man from waste and wold,
And, in his hut thy presence stealing,
Roused each familiar household feeling:
And, best of all, the happy ties,
The centre of the social band—
The instinct of the Fatherland!

United thus—each helping each,
Brisk work the countless hands for ever!
For naught its power to Strength can teach,
Like Emulation and Endeavor!
Thus linked the master with the man,
Each in his rights can each revere,
And while they march in freedom's van,
Scorn the lewd rout that dogs the rear!
To freemen labor is renown!
Who works—gives blessings and commands;
Kings glory in the orb and crown—
Be ours the glory of our hands.

Long in these walls—long may we greet
Your footfalls, Peace and Concord sweet!

Distant the day, oh! distant far,
When the rude hordes of trampling War
Shall scare the silent vale;
And where,
Now the sweet heaven, when day doth leave
The air,
Limns its soft rose-hews on the vale of Eve,
Shall the fierce war-brand tossing in the gale,
From town and hamlet shake the horrid glare!

VIII.

Now its destined task fulfilled,
Asunder break the prison-mould;
Let the goodly Bell we build,
Eye and heart alike behold.
The hammer down heave,
Till the cover it cleave:—
For noi till we shatter the wall of its cell
Can we lift from its darkness and bondage the Bell.
To break the mould the Master may,
If skilled the hand and ripe the hour;
But woe, when on its fiery way
The metal seeks itself to pour.
Frantic and blind, with thunder-knell,
Exploding from its shattered home,
And glaring forth, as from a hell,
Behold the red Destruction come
When rages strength that has no reason,
There breaks the mould before the season;
When numbers burst what bound before,
Woe to the State that thrives no more!
Yea, woe when in the city's heart,
The latent spark to flame is blown;
And from their thrall the Millions start,
No leader but their rage to own
Discordant howls the warning Bell,
Proclaiming discord wide and far,
And, borne but things of peace to tell,
Becomes the ghastliest voice of war:
"Freedom! Equality!"—to blood,
Rush the roused people at the sound!
Through street, hall, palace, roars the flood,
And banded murder closes round!
The hyæna-shapes (that women were!)
Jest with the horrors they survey;
From human breasts the hearts they tear—
As panthers rend their prey!
Naught rests to hallow;—burst the ties
Of Shame's religious, noble awe;
Before the Vice the Virtue flies,
And Universal Crime is Law!
Man fears the lion's kingly tread;
Man fears the tiger's fangs of terror;
But Man himself is most to dread,
When mad with social error.
No torch, though lit from Heaven, illumines
The Blind!—Why place it in his hand?
It lights not *him*—it but consumes
The City and the Land!

IX.

Rejoice and laud the prospering skies!
The kernel bursts its husk—behold
From the dull clay the metal rise.
Pure-shining, as a star of gold!
Rim and crown glitter bright,
Like the sun's flash of light,
And even the scutcheon, clear-graven, shall tell
That the art of a master has fashioned the Bell!

Come in—come in,
My merry men—we'll form a ring,
The new-born labor christening;
And "Concord" we will name her!—
To union may her heartfelt call
In brother-love attune us all!
May she the destined glory win

For which the Master sought to frame her—
Aloft—(all earth's existence under),
In blue-pavilioned heaven afar
To dwell—the Neighbor of the Thunder,
The Borderer of the Star;
Be hers above a voice to raise
Like those bright hosts in yonder sphere
Who, while they move, their maker praise
And lead around the wreathed year.
To solemn and eternal things
We dedicate her lips sublime,
As hourly, calmly, on she swings,
Touching, with every movement, Time!
No pulse—no heart—no feeling hers,
She lends the warning voice to Fate;
And still companions, while she stirs,
The changes of the Human State!
So may she teach us, as her tone,
But now so mighty, melts away—
That earth no life which earth has known
From the last silence can delay.

Slowly now the cords upheave her
From her earth-grave soars the Bell;
Mid the airs of Heaven we leave her,
In the Music-Realm to dwell.

Up—upward—yet raise—
She has risen—she sways.
Fair Bell, to our city bode joy and increase;
And oh, may thy first sound be hallowed to—PEACE

MICHAEL ANGELO BUONAROTTI.

By Samuel M. Smucker, LL. D.
Author of "History of the Four Georges," "Court and Reign of
Catherine II.," &c., &c.

HERE are various degrees in art as there are schools or grades in poetry. Among the different kinds of poetic effusion there is an ascending scale, from the simple pastoral to the aspiring epic. *Epic* poetry is justly regarded as the noblest and most difficult achievement of the muse. The reason of this estimate doubtless is, because, in the production of a great epic, the highest faculties of the human mind are exercised, and the loftiest emotions of the heart are excited. An *Epic* poem is the appropriate theatre for the display of all that is vast and glorious in conception; of all that is overpowering and terrific in action and expression; while the most impressive imagery and machinery, summoned from heaven, earth, and hell, are in appropriate keeping. Hence the best single standards by which such poems are estimated are their grandeur and sublimity; and he who possesses most of these characteristics, whatever may be his other merits or defects, ascends at once to the highest seat in the temple of poetic glory. The same remarks may be made in reference to supremacy in the arts. How-

ever difficult and admirable other merits may be, he whose works display most of the sublime and stupendous is marked as the greatest of artists. The portraying of the softer passions, the arts of designing, of coloring, of perspective, elegance of touch, and sweetness of expression, can only be displayed, in their perfection, by high genius; but genius higher still is demanded to execute that which is truly sublime, and which produces in the beholder the emotion of *elevation* in the highest degree.

No man that ever lived exhibited so much grandeur and sublimity in his conception, or in his execution; no artist so overpowers the senses of feebler men, by the magnitude and magnificence, the rugged strength and awful grandeur of his thoughts, as does Michael Angelo. And when he carries this element of sublimity so successfully into every department of art alike, and with such equal ease, he is with justice regarded as the King of artists; as the peerless Jupiter who sits upon the artistic throne, surrounded by noble gods of less degree; and who brings down his Olympian splendors to this little earth in all their native magnitude of proportions.

During the pontificate of Leo X., the productions of Michael Angelo were few and inferior in importance to those of any other period of his public life. It was a most unfortunate event, that the powers of this great man seem to have been impeded and obstructed by the very pontiff, from whom he had every reason to anticipate the most efficient and munificent patronage. But sufficient causes can be assigned for this unfortunate circumstance, which clearly throw the blame on Leo; and which prove, that though he loved art and artists, it was chiefly for his own glory and aggrandizement; and that when any cause interfered with the attainment of this end, he could sacrifice the good of art and of mankind to his own petty ambition. It is a lasting stigma on the life and history of Leo, that he was the means of wasting some of the most precious years of Michael Angelo's life, in superintending the quarrying of marble, in order thus to aggrandize the territory of Florence; instead of throwing around him favorable circumstances whereby to exercise his divine faculties, in such productions as would have been an honor to himself, to his country, and to his race.

At an early age this great artist, who